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the housing element



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VENTURA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN
HOUSING ELEMENT

Prepared by
Resource Management Agency
Planning Division

Adopted
November 20, 1984

This document was prepared pursuant to Title 7, California Government Code, Division 1, Chapter 3, Articles 5 and 10.6.

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HOUSING ELEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
Introduction.....	ii
I. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.....	1
A. Goals.....	1
B. Objectives.....	1
II. POLICIES AND PROGRAMS.....	4
A. Housing Preservation.....	6
B. Housing Rehabilitation.....	8
C. Housing Opportunities.....	9
D. Housing Diversity.....	13
E. Housing Equality.....	14
F. Other General Plan Elements and County Policies.....	14
G. Housing Element Update.....	15
TECHNICAL APPENDIX (Separate Document)	
I. Citizen Participation.....	1
II. Statutory Requirements.....	2
III. Housing Needs, Resources and Constraints.....	8
IV. Available Programs.....	86

Introduction

The Technical Appendix of the Housing Element discusses the statutory requirements and the citizen participation in the preparation of the Housing Element, analyzes the needs, resources and constraints to housing development in the County, and discusses the available Federal, State and local program options to address housing needs.

The following chapters of the Housing Element are intended to describe Ventura County's commitment to assure the maintenance, improvement and development of housing within the unincorporated area of the County. It provides specific details which will aid in the County's actual implementation of the identified goals established through the analysis of the County's housing needs. Chapter I identifies the housing goals and objectives of Ventura County and Chapter II presents the adopted policies and programs which will be initiated and implemented within the next five year period by the appropriate responsible agency.

The following definitions are offered to assist the reader in understanding this document: Goals are general statements formulated in light of identified issues and problems; Objectives are specific statements denoting measurable needs to be reached or achieved in the pursuit of goals; Policies are definite guidelines intended to shape day-to-day decisions and actions, so as to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the Element; and, Programs are similar to policies except they represent the commitment of specific actions and resources in an organized manner so as to accomplish the intended objectives. Additionally, the definition of a low income household is one whose income, with adjustments for household size, does not exceed 80% of the Countywide median income, and a moderate income household is one whose income with adjustments for household size, does not exceed 120% of Countywide median income. Affordability, unless otherwise noted, is a monthly housing payment which does not exceed 30% of monthly gross household income (30% is the level of payment accepted by HUD, and used in Federal housing programs).

I. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this chapter is to present and define both the goals of Ventura County for addressing the housing needs of its residents, and the objectives by which the goals can be realized. The goals are stated first, so that the reader will know the overall posture of the County with regard to housing. The objectives are then presented under the heading of the corresponding goal.

A. GOALS

1. Housing Preservation - Preserve the condition of the existing housing stock and the affordability of all affordable units.
2. Housing Rehabilitation - Improve the condition of existing substandard housing and housing otherwise in need of rehabilitation.
3. Housing Opportunities - Increase housing opportunities for persons of all income levels, with special emphasis on low and moderate income persons, including the elderly, single-headed households, large families, farmworkers, handicapped and homeless.
4. Housing Diversity - Promote a diversity of housing types, tenure, and price.
5. Housing Equality - Promote housing opportunities for all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, marital status, age, ancestry, national origin, color, or socio-economic status.
6. Other General Plan Elements and County Policies - Ensure that the Housing Element and new housing developments are consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the various elements of the General Plan and County adopted plans and policies, and ensure that Area Plans are consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Housing Element.
7. Housing Element Update - Ensure the Housing Element is kept up to date.

B. OBJECTIVES

1. Housing Preservation
 - a. Encourage the physical maintenance of the existing standard housing stock (23,560 units), especially mobile homes (1,578 units) in mobile home parks and multi-family rental units (2,504 units).
 - b. Assure the continued affordability of the existing affordable housing stock.
 - c. Assure, where feasible, that affordable housing in the Coastal Zone is replaced when demolished or converted.

2. Housing Rehabilitation

- a. Continue and expand the existing housing rehabilitation program.
 - 1) Initiate the rehabilitation of all 405 dwelling units which do not have plumbing.
 - 2) Identify additional "target areas" where rehabilitation of housing units would be beneficial.
- b. Promote the improvement of housing by supporting existing energy conservation and weatherization programs.

3. Housing Opportunities

- a. Strive to maintain at least a 3% vacancy rate in both rental and ownership housing Countywide.
- b. Promote 17,246 upper income housing units Countywide, and provide 1,227 privately constructed, upper income housing units in the unincorporated area of Ventura County by 1988.
- c. Promote 9,303 moderate income housing units Countywide, and provide 603 privately constructed, moderate income housing units in the unincorporated area of Ventura County by 1988.
- d. Promote 9,804 low income housing units Countywide, and provide 702 privately constructed, low income housing units in the unincorporated area of Ventura County by 1988.
- e. Promote 7,482 very low income housing units Countywide, and provide 513 very low income housing units in the unincorporated area of Ventura County by 1988. Ninety-four to 104 of these will be provided by the Area Housing Authority, and 419 to 409 will be provided by the private building industry.
- f. Facilitate the construction of housing which is suited to the needs of all low income groups, (i.e. farmworkers, elderly, handicapped, single-headed families, large families or homeless) both Countywide and within the unincorporated areas of the County.
- g. Assist low and moderate income households to purchase or rent homes.
- h. Provide affordable housing opportunities in the unincorporated areas of the Coastal Zone.

4. Housing Diversity

- a. Increase the number of multi-family rental units in areas which have a disproportionately high percentage of single-family housing units.

- b. Strive for an equal distribution of housing types and prices throughout the unincorporated County.
- c. Promote the utilization of manufactured homes in the unincorporated County where economically advantageous.

5. Housing Equality

Attempt to eliminate discrimination in housing by supporting Federal, State and local fair housing laws and policies.

6. Other General Plan Elements and County Policies

- a. The goals, objectives, and policies of the other elements of the General Plan and other adopted County plans should be considered at the time of permit application for housing development, especially with regard to the following:

- Consistency with adopted population forecasts
- Balance of residential development with employment opportunities
- Preservation and conservation of natural resources
- Recognition of environmental hazards and constraints
- Preservation and promotion of community character
- Availability of existing and planned infrastructure and urban services

- b. Area Plans should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Housing Element, as they are developed or updated.

7. Housing Element Update

Keep the Housing Element current by updating population data on an ongoing basis and by reassessing the goals, objectives and policies of the element, and evaluating the effectiveness of the element's implementation programs every five years.

II. POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

The County's commitment to housing preservation, improvement and development is documented in the following chapter. Other parties, however, also have an essential role in the attainment of the State's housing goal, which is that every California family should have decent housing and a suitable living environment. Firstly, Federal housing programs have traditionally been the major resource in housing for lower income persons, and it is therefore critical that the Federal government reaffirm its commitment to this cause. Secondly, many locally administered programs need funding in order to be implemented. If funds are not obtained through sources outside the local government (i.e. State or Federal funds) these programs may never actually be developed or effected. Thirdly, the private building industry will need to alter some traditional development practices. Scaling down the unit size and decreasing amenities, or reducing profit are some possible ways of assisting in the development of affordable housing. And, finally, the public's attitude toward innovative, affordable housing types, increased densities, smaller yards and the like, will need to become more accepting in order for any type of affordable housing development program to be realized in Ventura County, or in any other locality.

This chapter lists the policies and programs adopted by Ventura County to meet the goals and objectives which are stated in Chapter I. Each policy/program is presented under the heading of each of the goals previously identified in Chapter I (i.e., Housing Preservation, Housing Rehabilitation, Housing Opportunities, Housing Diversity, Housing Equality, Other General Plan Elements and County Policies, and Housing Element Update).

An attempt has been made not to duplicate programs under separate headings. For example, some programs which will provide "housing opportunity" would also add to "housing diversity", but have not been repeated. It is recommended, therefore, that all programs be reviewed to gain an understanding of how the programs interrelate and how, together, they will bring Ventura County closer to attaining its housing goals and objectives.

The material is organized so that each proposed program/policy is followed by five critical factors related to implementing the program or policy. Firstly the Responsible Agency, or the agency principally charged with program implementation, is named. Next, the Source of Funding which will be used in order to pay for program implementation is identified. Thirdly, Time Frame, or when the program is proposed to begin, is presented. Next, the Estimated Staff Time required to implement and administer the program is given. Staff time is not equal to calendar time; it assumes one person working full time on that particular project, with no other responsibilities. Estimated Cost is the cost, over and above what is already expended, which would be incurred by the responsible agency in implementing the program. These costs attempt to include salaries and overhead but are only estimates. Some programs are not expected to cause an increase in staff level over what currently exists. Because of that, the Estimated Cost for these programs reads "no additional cost".

The glossary on the following page will assist the reader in interpreting the acronyms which have been used within this Chapter.

GLOSSARY OF AGENCIES AND GRANTS

AHA	-	(Ventura County) Areawide Housing Authority
CAO	-	(Ventura County) Chief Administrative Office
CDBG	-	Community Development Block Grant
CHC	-	Commission on Human Concerns
CHFA	-	California Housing Finance Agency
FmHA	-	(U.S. Department of Agriculture) Farmer's Home Administration
HCD	-	(California) Department of Housing and Community Development
HUD	-	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
PAA	-	(Ventura County) Property Administration Agency
PSSA	-	(Ventura County) Public Social Services Agency
PWA	-	(Ventura County) Public Works Agency
RMA	-	(Ventura County) Resource Management Agency
SCAG	-	Southern California Association of Governments

A. HOUSING PRESERVATION

1. Continue the enforcement of zoning, building and safety, public health and fire codes by the appropriate County agencies on a complaint or voluntary request basis, and improve the communication regarding these matters between appropriate County agencies and the Area Housing Authority in order to preserve the existing housing stock.

Responsible Agencies: RMA (Planning, Building and Safety and Environmental Health) and the County Fire Protection District

Source of Funding: County General Fund and Fire Protection District Fund

Time Frame: Continue existing program; ongoing

Estimated Staff Time: Utilize existing enforcement staff

Estimated Cost: No additional cost to the County.

2. Continue the existing program to apply for CDBG or other funds to assist households with housing code violations (i.e. building and safety, fire, or public health) to repair, replace, or otherwise bring the housing unit into conformance with the code.

Responsible Agencies: CAO (CDBG Administrator) with the help of RMA (Building and Safety) and AHA

Source of Funding: County General Fund, CDBG, Section 8

Time Frame: FY 1984-85; ongoing

Estimated Staff Time: Utilize existing staff

Estimated Cost: No additional cost to the County

3. Continue the Mobile Home Park Rent Review Program to assure that the amount of rent does not increase more than set forth in the Mobile Home Park Rent Review Ordinance.

Responsible Agencies: RMA (Planning)

Source of Funding: County General Fund

Time Frame: Ongoing; to be reassessed in 1986

Estimated Staff Time: Utilize existing staff

Estimated Cost: No additional cost to the County

4. Prepare and implement an ordinance for the unincorporated areas of the Coastal Zone (as required by the Government Code), so that low and moderate income housing units are replaced when converted or demolished.

Responsible Agency: RMA (Planning)

Source of Funding: Develop Ordinance: County General Fund
Implement Ordinance: Applicant fees

Time Frame: Develop Ordinance: FY 1985-86
Implement Ordinance: Ongoing

Estimated Staff Time: Develop Ordinance: One staff month utilizing existing staff.
Implement Ordinance: Unknown (specific staff time depends on number of cases)

Estimated Cost: Develop Ordinance: No additional cost to the County.
Implement Ordinance: Unknown

5. Establish a resale control mechanism designed to assure the long-term affordability of units specifically sold as "affordable" and that are in developments which were granted a density bonus or other incentive. The mechanism for the sale or resale process should include:

- o A mechanism for selecting and qualifying eligible households (qualifications should be based on a percentage of the median income in the County adjusted for family size).
- o A mechanism for determining resale price (it should be based on the original selling price), plus value of improvements added by the owner, plus an increase in value based on the Countywide median income published by HUD.
- o A deed restriction which gives first right of refusal to the Area Housing Authority or its assignee.

Responsible Agencies: RMA (Planning)

Source of Funding: County General Fund

Time Frame: Develop Program: FY 1985-86
Implement Program: Ongoing

Estimated Staff Time: Develop Program: Three staff months utilizing existing staff
Implement Program: One staff month/year

Estimated Cost: Develop Program: No additional cost to the County
Implement Program: \$3,000/year

6. When Area Plans are updated or amended, discourage the conversion of existing residentially developed areas to other land uses.

Responsible Agency: RMA (Planning)

Source of Funding:	County General Fund or applicant fees
Responsible Agency:	RMA (Planning)
Source of Funding:	County General Fund or applicant fees
Time Frame:	As per each Area Plan or General Plan Amendment work program
Estimated Staff Time:	As per each Area Plan or General Plan Amendment work program
Estimated Cost:	As per each Area Plan or General Plan Amendment work program

B. HOUSING REHABILITATION

In addition to programs A.1 and A.2 under Housing Preservation, the following programs were adopted in order to rehabilitate housing:

1. Continue existing housing rehabilitation programs and apply for additional State and Federal funds for the rehabilitation of owner and renter occupied housing units. The funds should be used to improve the following types of substandard units which are located in the unincorporated area of the County:

- o Units which are overcrowded
- o Units which do not have plumbing
- o Units in need of other physical improvements
- o Units in need of weatherization

Responsible Agency:	AHA and CAO (CDBG Administrator)
Source of Funding:	HUD Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation, CDBG, and other funds acquired through State and Federal programs
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Estimated Staff Time:	Utilize existing staff
Estimated Cost:	No additional cost to the County

2. Contribute to the affordability of both rental and ownership housing by supporting the existing energy conservation and weatherization programs administered by CHC or other entities for existing housing units.

Responsible Agency:	CHC or other entities
Source of Funding:	State Office of Economic Opportunity, and the Southern California Gas Company

Time Frame: Ongoing

Estimated Staff Time: Utilize existing CHC staff

Estimated Cost: No cost to the County

C. HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

1. Ensure that Area Plans are consistent with Federal and State programs, and that they attempt to accomplish the following:
 - o Increase density, where appropriate, to reduce the cost of land per unit.
 - o Ensure an appropriate mix of residential densities (i.e., multi-family as well as single-family densities).
 - o Redesignate, where appropriate, any commercial, industrial or public land which has been determined to be excess to a residential land use designation in order to increase the land available for housing.
 - o Discourage the conversion of existing residentially developed or designated areas to other land uses.
 - o Ensure that there is enough residential land to meet planned employment opportunities and that there is a balanced amount of commercial, industrial and residential land use designations.
 - o Develop a Master Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Report for the area encompassed by the Area Plan which could reduce processing time associated with subsequent environmental documents for residential projects.

Responsible Agency: RMA (Planning)

Source of Funding: County General Fund

Time Frame: As per each Area Plan work program

Estimated Staff Time: As per each Area Plan work program

Estimated Cost: As per each Area Plan work program

2. Increase the land available for the construction of low income housing units, when funds are available, by making available (through purchase or lease) surplus, publicly owned land (including Federal and State owned land), or other available sites.

Responsible Agencies: AHA with the help of School and Park Districts, PAA and PWA

Source of Funding: HCD Rural Land Purchase Funds; CDBG

Time Frame: FY 1985-86; Ongoing

Estimated Staff Time: One staff month/year

Estimated Cost: \$3,000/year

3. Continue the ongoing program to review, evaluate and modify zoning and development standards, where appropriate, to reduce development costs. Priorities for review should be jointly established by the County and the building industry.

Responsible Agencies: RMA (Planning) and PWA

Source of Funding: County General Fund

Time Frame: Continue existing programs

Estimated Staff Time: Use existing staff positions

Estimated Cost: No additional cost to the County

4. Offer a 25% zoning density bonus for residential projects which provide a minimum of 1) 25% of the units for low and moderate income households, 2) 10% of the units for lower income households, or 3) 50% of the units for senior citizens households. These units should have strict resale or rental controls attached to them.

Responsible Agency: RMA (Planning)

Source of Funding: Developer fees

Time Frame: Continue existing program

Estimated Staff Time: Part of permit application process

Estimated Cost: No additional cost to the County.

5. Develop an inclusionary housing ordinance for the Coastal Zone as required by the Government Code to ensure the availability of affordable housing.

Responsible Agency: RMA (Planning)

Source of Funding: County General Fund

Time Frame: FY 1985-86

Estimated Staff Time: Two staff months utilizing existing staff

Estimated Cost: No additional cost to the County

6. Establish a priority processing procedure which will reduce processing time of low income housing projects to reduce the developer's holding costs for land which directly affects the final cost of housing.

Responsible Agencies: RMA (Planning) and PWA

Source of Funding: Developer fees

Time Frame: 1984-85; Ongoing

Estimated Staff Time: No additional staff is required, but processing time for other permits will increase.

Estimated Cost: No cost to the County, however, holding costs for other permits will increase.

7. Continue to apply the existing reimbursement procedure for original developers of major capital improvements.

Responsible Agency: PWA

Source of Funding: Developer fees

Time Frame: On-going

Estimated Staff Time: Use existing staff

Estimated Cost: No additional cost to the County

8. Expand the existing Mortgage Revenue Bond Financing Program and initiate a Multi-Family Bond Financing Program to provide low and moderate income housing in the County.

Responsible Agencies: CAO (CDBG Administrator)

Source of Funding: County General Fund and/or other funds or grants acquired through State or Federal programs

Time Frame: Develop Program: FY 1985-86
Implement Program: Ongoing

Estimated Staff Time: Develop Program: Three staff months
Implement Program: One staff month/year

Estimated Cost: Develop Program: \$9,000
Implement Program: \$3,000/ year

9. Continue to apply for Federal and State funds and grants to the fullest extent possible in order to develop affordable owner-occupied and rental housing for low and moderate income households, and for those with identified special needs (farmworkers, elderly, handicapped, homeless). Encourage and support other housing agencies and non-profit organizations concerned with housing to apply for all available funds for low and moderate income households and for those with identified special needs.

Funds and grants which could be applied for include, but are not limited to the following:

- CDBG
- FmHA - Section 515
- FmHA - Sections 514/516
- FmHA - Section 523
- HCD - Farmworker Housing Grant Fund
- HCD - Homeownership Assistance Program
- HCD - Rental Housing Construction Program
- HCD - Rural Land Purchase Fund
- HCD - Urban, Rural Predevelopment Funds
- CHFA - Rental Construction Assistance Program

Responsible Agency: CAO

Source of Funding: County General Fund and/or other grants and funds acquired through State or Federal programs

Time Frame: FY 1984-85; ongoing

Estimated Staff Time: Continue existing programs

Estimated Cost: No additional cost to the County

10. Continue the Section 8, Housing Assistance Payments Program to provide subsidies to eligible low income households.

Responsible Agency: AHA

Source of Funding: HUD - Section 8, Housing Assistance Payments Program

Time Frame: Ongoing

Estimated Staff Time: To be determined by responsible agency

Estimated Cost: To be determined by responsible agency

11. Form a task force committee comprised of city and county agencies and other public agencies interested in and involved in housing for the homeless. The committee will be charged with studying the number of homeless persons in the County and seeking feasible and effective ways of housing them, and researching the funding sources available to deal with the problem.

Responsible Agency: CHC to form committee and to act as coordinator

Source of Funding: Existing CHC funding

Time Frame: Ongoing

Estimated Staff Time: Utilize existing CHC staff

Estimated Cost: No cost to the County

12. Develop alternative procedures for, and report back to the Board of Supervisors on, the deferment of processing fees (excluding EIRs) for low and moderate income housing projects. A low income housing unit is defined as a unit which is "affordable" (monthly payments would not exceed 30% of the households gross monthly income) to households earning less than 80% of the Countywide median income. A moderate income unit is defined as a unit which is affordable to households earning less than 120% of the Countywide median income.

Responsible Agency: Develop Procedures: RMA (Planning)

Source of Funding: County General Fund

Time Frame: Develop Procedures: FY 1984-85

Estimated Staff Time: Develop Procedures: 1 staff month utilizing existing staff

Estimated Cost: Develop Procedures: No additional cost to the County

13. Develop alternative procedures for, and report back to the Board of Supervisors on, the deferment of improvement fees (i.e. Quimby Fee, Flood Control Fee, Water Service Fee, and Sanitation Fee) which are under the purview of the County for low and moderate income housing projects. A low income housing unit is defined as a unit which is "affordable" (monthly payments would not exceed 30% of the households gross monthly income) to households earning less than 80% of the Countywide median income. A moderate income unit is defined as a unit which is affordable to households earning less than 120% of the Countywide median income.

Responsible Agency: Develop Procedures: RMA (Planning)

Source of Funding: Develop Procedures: County General Fund

Time Frame: Develop Procedures: FY 1984-85

Estimated Staff Time: Develop Procedures: 2 staff months utilizing existing staff

Estimated Cost: Develop Procedures: No additional cost to the County

D. HOUSING DIVERSITY

In addition to the programs listed under Section C, Housing Opportunities, the following programs are suggested in order to promote housing diversity:

1. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to require minimum (as well as maximum) housing densities in the Residential Planned Development subzones.

Responsible Agency: RMA (Planning)
Source of Funding: County General Fund
Time Frame: FY 1985-86
Estimated Staff Time: Use existing staff (see Program C-3)
Estimated Cost: No additional cost to the County

2. Study the possibility of offering additional density bonuses or other incentives to encourage the construction of low and moderate income multi-family rental units.

Responsible Agency: RMA (Planning)
Source of Funding: County General Fund
Time Frame: FY 1985-86
Estimated Staff Time: Two staff months utilizing existing staff
Estimated Cost: No additional cost to the County

E. HOUSING EQUALITY

1. Continue the Fair Housing Program to provide a full range of services including counseling and referral, affirmative action, publications relative to fair housing laws, and tenant-landlord rights.

Responsible Agency: CHC
Source of Funding: County General Fund and/or CDBG to replace or supplement the existing funding source (City of Port Hueneme)
Time Frame: Continue existing program; ongoing
Estimated Staff Time: Utilize existing CHC staff
Estimated Cost: \$15,000/year

F. OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS AND COUNTY POLICIES

1. Review residential housing development entitlements for consistency with all elements of the General Plan and other County adopted plans and policies, especially in regard to the following:
 - o Consistency with adopted population forecasts.
 - o Balance of residential development with employment opportunities.
 - o Preservation and conservation of natural resources.

- o Recognition of environmental hazards and constraints.
- o Preservation and promotion of community character.
- o Availability of existing or planned infrastructure and urban services.

Responsible Agency: RMA (Planning)

Source of Funding: Developer fees

Time Frame: Continue existing program; ongoing

Estimated Staff Time: Utilize existing staff

Estimated Cost: No additional cost to the County

2. As Area Plans are prepared or updated, the goals, objectives, policies and programs of the Housing Element should be incorporated (see Program C.1.). The Area Plans currently under revision are the Saticoy Plan and the Piru Plan.

Responsible Agency: RMA (Planning)

Source of Funding: County General Fund

Time Frame: As per each Area Plan work program

Estimated Staff Time: As per each Area Plan work program

Estimated Cost: As per each Area Plan work program

G. HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE

1. Expand the existing Development Monitoring Program to monitor housing and population trends, and periodically reassess the County's housing needs, objectives and implementation programs. Housing factors that should be monitored include:
 - o Population increases and distribution.
 - o Rental housing construction and vacancy rates.
 - o Ownership housing construction and vacancy rates.
 - o Employment generation and housing demand.
 - o Current housing need by type, tenure and number.
 - o Number of homeless persons and their distribution
 - o Land availability for the construction of low and moderate income housing.

- o Evaluation of Implementation Programs annually as required by the Government Code.

Responsible Agency: RMA (Planning)
Source of Funding: County General Fund
Time Frame: FY 1985-86; ongoing
Estimated Staff Time: Four staff months/year utilizing existing staff
Estimated Cost: No additional cost to the County

2. Update the Housing Element by 1988.

Responsible Agency: RMA (Planning)
Source of Funding: County General Fund
Time Frame: FY 1987-88
Estimated Staff Time: One staff year
Estimated Cost: \$36,000

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